

# *Michael Lin*

LOCOMOTION  
STUDY GUIDE

MCAD

MUSEUM OF  
CONTEMPORARY  
ART & DESIGN

# MICHAEL LIN EXHIBITION | FORMAL

This study guide is designed to help students and non-students to explore the work further.



Michael Lin, *Through the "painting"*, 2007

Using floral patterns based on traditional Taiwanese textiles and decorative arts, Michael Lin's work has covered the walls, floors, windows or furniture of a variety of spaces, creating a playful and nontraditional encounter with art. Museums are examples of places where one can encounter art.

## Grade 1-3

A museum is defined by wordcentral.com as: "A building or part of a building in which objects of lasting interest or value are displayed." There are many kinds of museums you can visit such as: Art Museums, Archaeology Museums, History Museums, Science and Technology Museums, Ethnology Museums, Specialized Museums, Regional Museums, and General Museums.

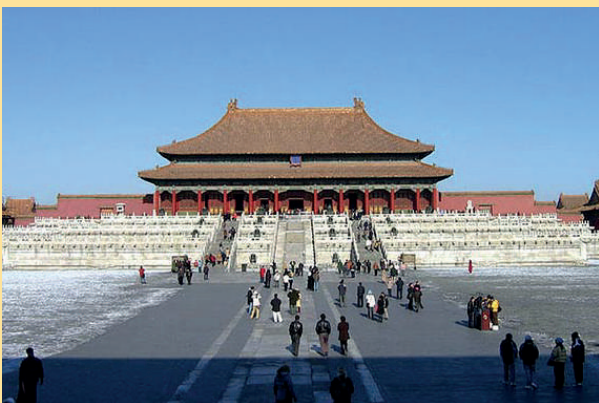
Here are a few examples of famous museums around the world:



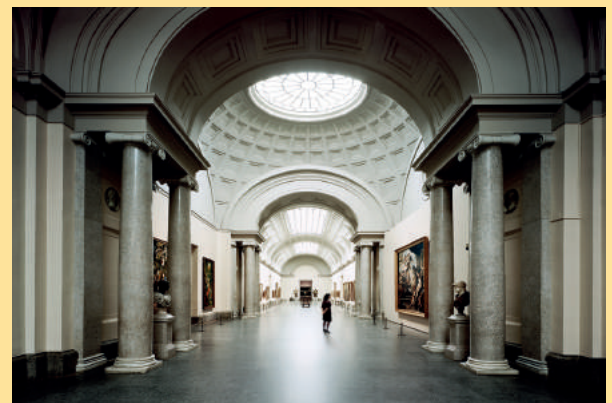
The Louvre Museum in Paris, France  
Pronounced as [luuv] or, [loo-vruh]



The Metropolitan Museum of Art  
New York City, United States



The Palace Museum, Beijing, China



Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain

Have you heard of or been to any of the following museums in Manila? See the images below.



Museo Pambata, Roxas Blvd., Manila



Mind Museum, Bonifacio Global City



National Museum, Taft Ave., Manila

There are also museums in some schools and in other regions of the Philippines. Does your school have a museum? Here are a few examples of museums in schools around Manila.

**You could try visiting and researching on the following:**

1. Ateneo Art Gallery, a modern art gallery. Ateneo de Manila University, Katipunan.
2. Bayani Folk Arts Museum, a museum of ethnological artifacts from various Philippine ethnic groups as well as Bayanihan memorabilia. Philippine Women's University, Taft.
3. Museum at De La Salle University, a contemporary Filipino arts museum. De La Salle University, Taft.
4. Jorge B. Vargas Museum and Filipiniana Research Center, a collection of art, stamps and coins. UP Diliman, UP Campus.

If you have visited a museum, what was your experience like? Why? Try to answer the questions below. If it is your first time visiting, try to observe MCAD and answer the following questions after your visit.

**Some questions:**

1. Were you given an orientation of the museum rules and regulations? Can you remember some museum rules?
2. Do these rules affect how you view, interpret or otherwise engage with the art inside the museum? Observe how these rules affect the behaviour of others around an artwork.
3. Are there rules you'd like to suggest to enhance your museum experience?

MCAD (The Museum of Contemporary Art and Design) is a contemporary art museum that aims to provide a space for which contemporary culture can be initiated, experienced, and studied. It does this by collaborating with local and international curators and professional artists.

For this exhibit, MCAD brought in Michael Lin, a Taiwanese artist based in Belgium and China. Michael Lin is a contemporary artist who takes images and products of a region and using these, creates site-specific installations and paintings that reflect on everyday reality, as shaped by the culture and norms of society.

What does the word Contemporary mean?

Contemporary: happening or beginning now or in recent times (Merriam-Webster). According to [getty.edu](http://getty.edu), contemporary art refers to art made and produced by artists living today.

One of the skills some artists have is that of drawing. Drawing, defined by Merriam-Webster: "A picture, image, etc., that is made by making lines on a surface with a pencil, pen, marker, chalk, etc., but usually not with paint."

Do you know how to draw or know of someone who does? What do you/they draw?

One of the things you can draw are shapes. Can you name all the shapes that you know and like to draw? What are the shapes you see inside, outside and around MCAD? Which shapes are interesting to you?

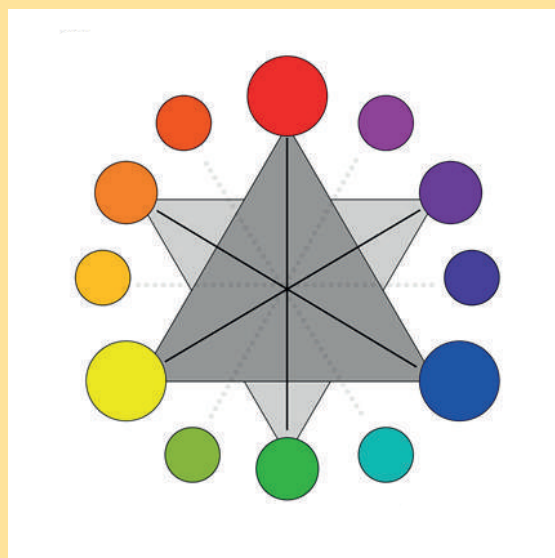


Photo of Michael Lin, from Ullens Center for Contemporary Art

What shapes do you see in the artist's work? If you were to make a work like the artist, would you use other shapes, and if yes, which ones?

Usually in artworks, artists apply color to add life to their drawing. Do you also do that? Name the colors that the artist used for his works. Are they primary or secondary colors? If you were to create a work like the artist, what colors would you use? Why?

Here is a chart of colors that you might like to use. Can you identify the primary colors, secondary colors and tertiary colors?





## GRADE 4-6

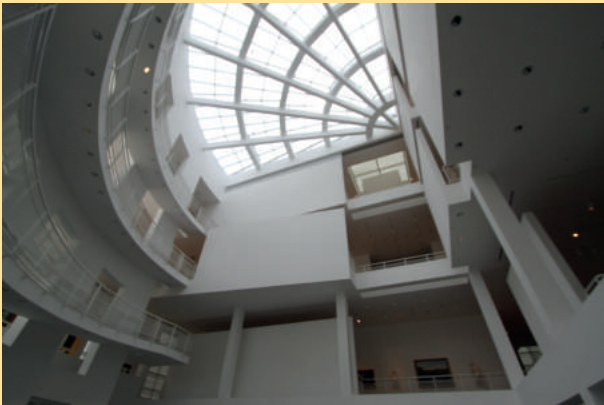


Michael Lin, *Model Home*, 2012



Michael Lin, *Utah Sky 2065-40 (blue curve)*, 2015

Michael Lin turns away from painting as an object of contemplation toward one of painting as a bounded, physical space, one we can settle into and inhabit (Vivian Rehberg).



High Museum of Art, designed by architect Richard Meier

Lin designed *Utah Sky 2065-40 (blue curve)* in response to architect Richard Meier's soaring spaces and stunning skylight. See the image on the left side. Have you been to places/spaces that are similar in look or in feel to this?

Have you ever been inside a museum or gallery? How did you find the experience, was it exciting, dull, informative, interesting? You can try to consider some elements such as the atmosphere, the scale of the work, the colors used, and more.

Notice that the artist's work is very colorful. What colors can you identify? Colors are said to portray or evoke moods. See the color chart below, and find out for yourself if the moods stated correspond with yours when you see the color. If not, how do these colors make you feel? Do you think colors can affect the mood of people?

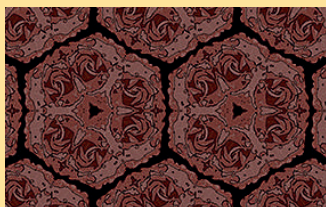


A good way to experiment and play with color is through patterns. The artist used floral patterns in his work, but there are also many other kinds of patterns that exist. Check out the samples below:



### Animal Print

A pattern resembling the skin or fur of an animal. Animal prints have appeared in textiles and other items. Can you identify the animals whose prints were used?



### Batik

A design with a tie-dyed appearance created by coating the parts of cloth not to be dyed with removable wax. Colors often include indigo, dark brown, and white. Certain patterns have historic meanings and can only be worn by nobility. Batik-making is done in many countries, including the Philippines. You can look at the similarities and differences in the patterns



### Floral

A design using flowers and other nature elements such as seed pods, leaves, and marine plants.



### Geometric

A motif, pattern, or design depicting abstract, nonrepresentational shapes such as lines, circles, ellipses, triangles, rectangles, and polygons. Islamic decorations make frequent use of geometric pattern.



### Paisley

A stylized teardrop-shaped design that originally appeared on kashmir shawls mass-produced in Paisley, Scotland.

Create your own pattern. Focus on the variation of thick and thin lines, and color combinations.

For more information on patterns, check this website: <http://artlandia.com/wonderland/glossary/>

**GRADE 7-12**



Michael Lin, *Utah Sky 2065-40 (blue curve)*, 2015



## GRADE 7-10

- In Michael Lin's *Locomotion*, he covers an entire wall with paintings and sketches. You have walls in your schools, home, etc. How big or small are these walls compared to the walls of MCAD? Are any of these covered? If yes, with what? If you were to cover an entire wall with a painting, why would you do it and how would you want it to look like?
- Michael has also done work on other surfaces. On his website [ateliermichaellin.com](http://ateliermichaellin.com), you can find out what other surfaces he has worked on.



Michael Lin, *The Color is Bright the Beauty Is Generous*, 2010



Gallery 5 wall, 2002  
Queensland Art Gallery



Michael Lin, *Untitled (Clockwise)*, 2015

- What other surfaces would you choose to paint on? Not work on? Which designs would work on which surfaces? Why? What medium would work for which surface? for which design?
- As mentioned, Michael Lin's designs are based on Taiwanese textiles. Are there other artists who are inspired by textiles or use textiles in their works? The National Museum and the Ayala Museum have exhibitions on Filipino textiles. Visit these exhibitions. Where do you think Filipino textiles were made? Can you name a few places where textiles and weaving are the main livelihood in the Philippines? How do Filipino textiles differ from Taiwanese textiles? What were the uses of these textiles?

## Grade 11-12

- Michael Lin is an avid biker, especially as the cities he chose as his bases encourage biking. Look into Shanghai's, Belgium's and France's biking history. Do you bike? Research into the movement called Bayanihan sa Kalye, Firefly Brigade and other such movements in the Philippines and abroad.
- Do you know what a pedicab is? How different is this from a tricycle, a *kuliglig*? Why do you think the artist decided to decorate the tricycles with floral print? What would be your reaction if you saw a pedicab with Michael Lin's designs? What designs are usually found in pedicabs and why? What do you think is the social significance of the tricycles in this exhibit?
- Which component of the exhibition did you find the most interesting? Why?





Michael Lin, *Untitled Gathering*, 2008



Michael Lin, *A Modest Veil*, 2010

Transforming the institutional architecture of the public museum such as in his installation *A Modest Veil, 2010* at Vancouver Art Gallery (see image above), Michael Lin's unconventional paintings invite visitors to reconsider their usual perception of those spaces, and to become an integral part of the work, giving meaning to its potential as an area for interaction, encounter, and re-creation.



Traditional Taiwanese Fabric



Tennis Dessus, The Contemporary Museum, Hawaii

## Architecture and Interior Design

Lin designed *Utah Sky 2065-40 (blue curve)* for the High's Stent Family Wing in response to architect Richard Meier's soaring spaces and stunning skylight. How would you describe Lin's response to the space? What do you think were the visitors' reactions to this response to the space? How would you design a space that would encourage others to interact with each other? How would it look like?

You can make use of the 7 Visual Design Principles to make your design.

### Visual Design Principles

Seven principles encompass an interesting design:

1. Balance
2. Rhythm
3. Emphasis
4. Proportion and scale
5. Movement
6. Contrast
7. Unity



Are these principles at work here at Michael Lin: Locomotion?

## Fashion Design

In relation to Michael Lin's innovative use of textile designs, think of ways you too can make use of textiles in a different manner. What other designs can you explore when creating a piece of clothing? There are many different fabrics and methods of styling such.

You could further your research through these sites:

<http://www.nyfashioncenterfabrics.com/pages/history-of-fabric-and-textiles>

<http://textilesource.com>

Try sketching a design using contemporary elements. Michael Lin believes fashion can shape our minds as well as our bodies. Can you think of ways this can happen?

## Industrial Design

Think of the times you have ridden a tricycle. What did you like about it, and what did you dislike about it? If you were to redesign the tricycle, how would it look like?

Consider these Guiding Principles for sustainable transportation:

Principle #1: Access

People are entitled to reasonable access to other people, places, goods and services.

Principle #2: Equity

Nation states and the transportation community must strive to ensure social, interregional and inter-generational equity, meeting the basic transportation-related needs of all people including women, the poor, the rural, and the disabled.

Principle #3: Health and Safety

Transportation systems should be designed and operated in a way that protects the health (physical, mental and social well-being) and safety of all people, and enhances the quality of life in communities.

Principle #4: Individual Responsibility

All individuals have a responsibility to act as stewards of the natural environment, undertaking to make sustainable choices with regard to personal movement and consumption.

Principle #5: Integrated Planning

Transportation decision makers have a responsibility to pursue more integrated approaches to planning.

Principle #6: Pollution Prevention

Transportation needs must be met without generating emissions that threaten public health, global climate, biological diversity or the integrity of essential ecological processes.

Principle #7: Land and Resource Use

Transportation systems must make efficient use of land and other natural resources while ensuring the preservation of vital habitats and other requirements for maintaining biodiversity

Principle #8: Fuller Cost Accounting

Transportation decision makers must move as expeditiously as possible toward fuller cost accounting, reflecting the true social, economic and environmental costs, in order to ensure users pay an equitable share of costs.

See more at: <http://www.gdrc.org/uem/sustran/sustran-principles.html>

## **Multimedia Arts**

How do you think art can resonate throughout a wide audience using your multimedia skills? Consider layout, video, web design, animation, photography and branding. How could you make his work relatable to others as an MMA student?

If you could take Michael Lin's work for example, how would you make it reach a wider audience, and how would you grab that audience's attention?



# MICHAEL LIN EXHIBITION | INFORMAL

*“My works create temporary places—not a painting surface but a pedestrian, unremarkable place of respite. I use the term unremarkable for my work, even though they are most of the time monumental in scale, for they recede into the background at the tilt of the head. They are not focus points like a painting or a sculpture... I think that some of the most important works of art are the ones that we live with and that affect our daily lives such as architecture, furniture, and fashion, which can be said to even shape our bodies and minds.”*

– Michael Lin, in conversation with Gerald Matt.

On the subject of his own practice, multimedia and installation artist Michael Lin once explained: “I’m not an expressionist. I’m trying to bring about a collective work.” Many of his major works have involved the creation or transformation of a collective or public space. His work in MCAD features a range of multimedia art forms by way of wall paintings, refurbished pedicabs, painted wooden stools, and flags. These works are all united through the use of Michael’s prevalent floral pattern.

To further your knowledge, here are a couple of definitions:

Installation art, according to [saylor.org](http://saylor.org) is defined as

[...] an artistic genre of site-specific, three-dimensional works designed to transform a viewer’s perception of a space. Generally, the term is applied to interior spaces, whereas exterior interventions are often called Land art; however the boundaries between these terms overlap.

Multimedia art is defined by [movementforhope.org](http://movementforhope.org) as

[...] an innovative discipline which seeks to unify a large range of art forms. This is creatively achieved by combining an array of artistic insights and crafts such as film, literature, performance, music and sound, drama, visual arts, or design. This merging of ideas and forms unveils a contemporary dimension or entity which attempts to engage an audience in a novel and unique way.

How do you think Michael Lin’s work has transformed MCAD’s atmosphere? Do you think there are spaces in Manila that could use some Michael Lin wall paintings? Where do you think you would place a Michael Lin painting and why?

“I am less interested in the formalized space in the institutions for presenting art. These spaces on the margins of the institutional space, the events and social interactions, are much more important for me. I am much more interested in the everyday, the general culture. It is in these places where art is not so clearly defined that questions of the function of art come to light.”

Consider the streets and other alternative spaces to museums as formal sites for presenting art. How different or similar is the presentation? Encounter with art? What do you think is the function of Michael Lin’s artwork? How do you think it resonates with you today? How do you think it resonates with Filipinos?



Installation at Vancouver Art Gallery



DE LA SALLE-  
COLLEGE  
OF SAINT  
BENILDE